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New York

President:	Mr. Gasana	(Rwanda)
Members:	Argentina	Mrs. Perceval
	Australia	Mr. Quinlan
	Chad	Mr. Cherif
	Chile	Mr. Olguin
	China	Mr. Liu Jieyi
	France	Mr. Araud
	Jordan	Mr. Hmoud
	Lithuania	Ms. Murmokaite
	Luxembourg	Ms. Lucas
	Nigeria	Mr. Sarki
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Oh Joon
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Power

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Israel to participate in this meeting.

I propose that the Council invite the Permanent Observer of the Observer State of Palestine to the United Nations to participate in this meeting, in accordance with the provisional rules of procedure and the previous practice in this regard.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I welcome the presence of His Excellency Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, to whom I now give the floor.

The Secretary-General: I thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to brief the members of the Security Council on the situation in Israel and the Gaza Strip. I felt that the seriousness of the situation required a consultation with Council members.

We are now several days into a dangerous escalation in and around Gaza. Over the past several days, the Palestinian factions Hamas and Islamic Jihad have fired a barrage of more than 550 rockets and mortars from Gaza into Israel, and the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) have launched more than 500 air strikes on Gaza, primarily targeting Hamas/Islamic Jihad facilities and private residences of their members. Eighty-eight Palestinians, many of them civilians, are reported to have been killed, and 339 are reported to have been injured. As of yesterday afternoon, some 150 homes had been destroyed or severely damaged, with nearly 900 people having been displaced.

Three rockets were reportedly fired at Jerusalem, with the IDF confirming the impact of one in northern Jerusalem, without specifying the exact location. Rockets were also fired at Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Hadera, Ashdod and Be'er Sheva, inter alia. Some were intercepted by the Iron Dome defence system; others caused material damage and injured two Israeli civilians. An attempted infiltration by Palestinian militants by sea from Gaza into Ashkelon on the night of 8 July was reportedly foiled by the IDF, which killed the militants. Attacks on both sides continued today.

The situation leading up to the eruption of the past few days was already precarious, following the atrocious kidnapping and murder of four young people — three Israeli Yeshiva students and one Palestinian teenager. Those acts shattered a period of relative calm and were widely condemned by the United Nations and the international community. Those responsible must be brought to justice. I would like to take this opportunity to again express my deepest condolences to the families and loved ones of the victims of those heinous acts.

Today, we face the risk of an all-out escalation in Israel and Gaza, with the threat of a ground offensive still palpable — and preventable only if Hamas stops the rocket firing. Prime Minister Netanyahu of Israel has announced that the Israeli Cabinet and security establishment remain unified in their decision to intensify operations aimed at targeting terrorist cells and protecting the security of Israelis. President Abbas continues to appeal for an end to this crisis and has reached out to President Sisi of Egypt, seeking Egypt's facilitation in the brokering of a ceasefire on the basis of the Cairo-brokered November 2012 ceasefire of which I was part.

The rhetoric has been equally unrelenting. The Hamas leadership, in public statements issued by Khaled Meshaal and Moussa Abu Marzouk, has called for continued resistance despite earlier indications by both Israel and Hamas that they were not interested in a confrontation. It is now more urgent than ever to try to find common ground for a return to calm and a ceasefire understanding.

Once again, civilians are paying the price for the continuation of conflict. My paramount concern is for the safety and well-being of all civilians, no matter where they are. It pains me — and it should pain us all — to be reliving circumstances that are all too reminiscent of the two most recent wars in Gaza. I have consistently condemned indiscriminate rocket fire from Gaza into Israel. At the same time, the excessive use of force and endangering of civilian lives are also intolerable. It is unacceptable for citizens on both sides to permanently live in fear of the next aerial attack.

All parties, including Palestinian armed groups, must respect international humanitarian law. Israel has legitimate security concerns, but I am also concerned

at the many Palestinian deaths and injuries as a result of Israeli operations. I continue to condemn the rising number of civilian lives lost in Gaza. Once again, Palestinian civilians are caught between Hamas's irresponsibility and Israel's tough response.

Over the past few days, I have been engaging with world leaders, including the King of Saudi Arabia, the Emir of Qatar, the President of Egypt, the heads of the League of Arab States and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the United States Secretary of State, the European Union High Representative, and others. All agree on the importance of returning to calm. Our challenge is to help the parties move away from their entrenched respective narratives.

I have also spoken to Prime Minister Netanyahu of Israel and President Abbas of Palestine. I called on both sides to exercise maximum restraint, show statesmanship and weigh the risks of further escalation. Gaza, and the region as a whole, cannot afford another full-blown war and another fault line. The potential negative spillover elsewhere in the West Bank is also unpredictable in an already tenuous and combustible situation. The current crisis underscores yet again that the status quo is unsustainable.

A solution for Gaza is as indispensable as ever. Core elements of resolution 1860 (2009) remain unimplemented, including the reunification of Gaza and the West Bank under one legitimate Palestinian Authority, committed to the Palestine Liberation Organization principles. If diplomacy can restore calm and end the violence, a broader ceasefire will have to address the underlying causes of conflict, provide for a full opening of the crossings and ensure an end to weapons smuggling. A solution must also include overcoming the chronic humanitarian vulnerability of Gaza, where water and energy are in constant short supply. I continue to encourage the Government of Egypt to urgently open its crossing for humanitarian purposes.

Turmoil in the West Bank has continued with attacks, reprisals and provocations. Although riots in East Jerusalem have decreased since Monday, clashes between Palestinians and Israeli security forces in the rest of the West Bank have continued, including in and around refugee camps. Yesterday, some 10 Palestinians were reportedly injured by the IDF near Ramallah and Bethlehem during protests in solidarity with Gaza, which included attacks on Israeli security infrastructures in the West Bank. It is clear that the international community must accelerate efforts to achieve an immediate halt to this escalation and reach a durable ceasefire. All actors must exercise maximum restraint and respect international humanitarian law. I will continue my efforts to bridge gaps and revive negotiations.

At the same time, I understand that many Israelis and Palestinians are disenchanted with the peace process, especially after the lack of results from the latest diplomatic effort. This setback, and the others that we have seen over many years of Middle East diplomacy, have certainly undermined confidence that peace is possible. But surely no one can wish for the alternative of perpetual cycles of violence, pervasive mistrust and polarized peoples. Now is not a time for further incitement or vengeance. We must not let spoilers prevail. We must keep the situation from getting any further out of control. Any further spiral of violence could have alarming unforeseen consequences.

This is one of the most critical tests the region has faced in recent years. More than ever, the situation calls for bold thinking and creative ideas. We must strive to restore not only calm today but a political horizon for tomorrow. The parties themselves, regional partners and the international community must do everything possible to resume meaningful negotiations towards a viable two-State solution. All must recognize once and for all that only a peace agreement will bring lasting security for Israelis and Palestinians.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

I now give the floor to the Permanent Observer of the Observer State of Palestine.

Mr. Mansour (Palestine): I want to begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your country's accession to the presidency of the Security Council for this month. We trust in your wisdom and leadership in successfully leading the Council this month. We also wish to convey our thanks to your predecessor, the Ambassador of the Russian Federation, for a job well done last month.

I also wish to thank all members of the Council, through you, for responding very swiftly to our call, the calls of the League of Arab States, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, and, I believe, the call of the Secretary-General for convening this meeting very quickly. We are grateful that you have done so,

and we hope that the Council will find the political will to act to bring this aggression against our people to an immediate end.

Let me also thank the Secretary-General for his personal involvement yesterday and today, for his contact with leaders in all corners of the globe, for being with us today, and for his contribution to this discussion. I hope that his efforts among all Council members will produce the needed call for an immediate ceasefire and for an end to the carnage and attacks on the entire civilian population of Palestine in all parts of the occupied territory, especially the Gaza Strip.

I come before the Security Council, on the instructions of the Palestinian leadership under President Mahmoud Abbas and with the support of the Arab Group, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, to urgently appeal to the Security Council to uphold its Charter duties for the maintenance of international peace and security. We call upon the Council to act immediately to protect civilian lives, which are being destroyed and lost with each passing minute of the Israeli military aggression being waged against the Palestinian people in occupied Palestine, in particular in the Gaza Strip. I speak on behalf of the suffering and grieving Palestinian people, who are enduring yet another barrage of death, destruction, trauma and terror, which is being perpetrated willfully and maliciously against them by the Israeli occupying forces, before the eyes of the world, as it persists with its nearly five-decade long belligerent military occupation.

This illegal, inhumane Israeli occupation is unjustifiable in any context and contravenes all principles of international law, human decency and moral conscience. It is an occupation — including armed forces and terrorist settlers — that intentionally perpetrates the murder, burning and maiming of children; the killing and wounding of women, men and elderly persons; extrajudicial executions; the destruction of homes; the theft and colonization of another people's land; the forced displacement and dispossession of civilians, rendering them homeless and impoverished; the desecration of holy sites, especially in occupied East Jerusalem; and the abduction, imprisonment and detention of thousands of civilians, including children. It is an occupation that proves, again and again, its racist, aggressive, expansionist agenda and lack of respect for the sanctity of life and the rights of the Palestinian people, who history has condemned to the misfortune of suffering under this occupation.

Yet, absurdly and offensively, the Israeli Government perpetrating this criminal occupation claims to be the only so-called democracy in the Middle East and to have the "most moral army" in the world, even as that Government is composed of members openly advocating and inciting the killing and ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian people and engages in such ruthless military attacks against a defenceless civilian population.

I come before the Security Council to say: enough of the bloodshed of the Palestinian people, enough of their oppression under the Israeli occupation, enough of this injustice and enough of this violence and conflict, which is inflicting so much suffering on innocent people on both sides and undermining regional and international peace and stability.

In the past few weeks, I have conveyed many formal letters to the Council drawing urgent attention to this crisis, with barely any reaction, with the exception of the press statement of 2 July regarding the heinous killing and burning of the Palestinian youth, Mohammed Abu Khdeir by Israeli settler terrorists in occupied East Jerusalem. In those letters, I have detailed the illegal actions being committed by Israel in grave violation of international humanitarian law, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention, human rights law and international criminal law, namely, the provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. There is no doubt that the occupying Power is systematically committing human rights violations, war crimes and State terror.

For days, Israel has persisted with its relentless attacks, launching hundreds of airstrikes and artillery bombardment against civilian areas in the Gaza Strip, terrorizing our people, killing dozens of civilians and injuring hundreds. The critical humanitarian situation in Gaza, long-suffering under Israel's occupation and blockade, is rapidly deteriorating and, in this holy month of Ramadan, life there has come to a standstill, with fear and panic widespread. As the majority of the civilians in Gaza are refugees, and camps continue to be among the targets of Israeli military attacks, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East has declared an emergency in Gaza.

In the West Bank, Israeli military raids continue daily in Palestinian cities, towns, villages and refugee camps, and casualties are continued to be caused by the excessive, lethal force of the Israeli occupying forces against Palestinian civilians, including peaceful demonstrators. Homes have been demolished. Since the start of the recent crisis, on 12 June, more than 850 Palestinians have been arrested or detained, bringing the total number of Palestinians captive in Israeli jails to more than 6,000, including children, women and elected officials. Moreover, settler violence, terrorism and incitement against Palestinian civilians, especially children and farmers, and acts of destruction against Palestinian homes, orchards and religious sites continue unabated under the protection of occupying forces, which the Israeli Government illegally transferred to the occupied Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem.

At this moment, the Palestinian death toll stands at more than 80 people — in fact, it could be above 90. Today, an entire family of eight was decimated as a result of the heinous attacks and aggression by the Israeli occupying forces against our people in Gaza. Hundreds more civilians have been wounded by Israeli airstrikes, tank shelling, live ammunition, rubber bullets, stun grenades, tear gas canisters and beatings. Many are in critical condition.

Children, who in Gaza constitute over half of the population, are suffering disproportionately and, similar to Israel's military savagery of December 2008 to January 2009 and November 2012, are among the many victims. Deepening the trauma, families also continue to bear multiple tragedies, with some families being decimated by Israeli attacks. Among the family of eight people murdered today were five children. We bear witness to their suffering and recall here some of the many lives that have been lost to this insane, inhumane Israeli brutality.

(*spoke in Arabic*)

From this forum, I should like to salute the people of Gaza and to reiterate that the Israeli aggression will not alter the determination of our people, which is stronger than any measures of collective punishment or reppression by the occupying authority against the Palestinian people, in particular against the 1.7 million citizens of our beloved Gaza. We recall the memory of our martyrs killed as a result of the current aggression. On behalf of the entire Palestinian people, the Palestinian Authority and others around the world who love peace and justice, we honour their memory, which will remain with us in heart and spirit. We will not forget our beloved children who have been the victims of settler acts and the Israeli occupying authorities.

No act in self-defence can justifty the killing of children or the oppression of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. I should like to mention just a few of the Palestinian children who have been martyred by the occupation: Mohammed Abu Khdeir, 16; Ghanim Abdelgafoor, 1; Mohammed Malaki, 2; Mohammed Khalaf Al-Nouassrah, 4; Nidal Khalef Al-Nouassrah, 5; Siraj Abdel-al, 8; Bassim Qawareh, 10; Mohammed Ashour, 13; Hussein Qawareh, 14; and the child Abdullah Abughazel, 4, who died today.

(*spoke in English*)

We reject the audacious claims by Israel that the Palestinian civilian population in Gaza is being used as a so-called human shield, while it knowingly and intentionally strikes at densely populated civilian areas. We also reject the claims of self-defence by Israel, while, despite the prohibition under international law, it deliberately carries out reprisals and collective punishment against the Palestinian people in declared retaliation and revenge, directly called for by the Israeli Prime Minister himself, for the killing of three Israeli settlers, which the Palestinian leadership has clearly condemned.

We recall that Israel abruptly suspended the peace negotiations in April in response to the reconciliation of the Palestinian Liberation Organization and Hamas — a legitimate and necessary step long called for by our people, as well as by the international community. We also recall that Israel has publicly declared its opposition to the Palestinian national unity Government and has used every baseless pretext to provoke and undermine the Palestinian Government with the aim of forcing its collapse, including through the latest military aggression. We condemn such cynical tactics, provocations and illegal behaviour and call on the international community also to condemn it.

There can be no justification for the killing of innocent civilians, no matter where, when or by whom. All pretexts suggesting otherwise must be rejected. Instead, all efforts must be exerted to bring a halt to the violence and terror that are being perpetrated against civilians, including through measures to uphold and to enforce respect for international law. The Security Council cannot remain paralysed and marginalized

as Israeli war crimes continue against the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip and in the rest of the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and a new cycle of violence consumes everything in its path. The Council must shoulder its responsibilities. It must act to protect civilian lives, de-escalate the current crisis and salvage the prospects for peace and security in our troubled region. If it fails to do so, it will further diminish its own credibility and will be complicit in allowing innocent children, women and men to die and the situation to further destabilize, with far-reaching consequences.

We call in particular for the protection of the Palestinian people. Israel has clearly violated and abdicated its responsibility as an occupying Power to ensure the safety and well-being of the civilian population under its occupation. The international community, in line with its legal obligations — and I stress the obligations of the high contracting parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention — must therefore ensure the protection of our people until the end of the military occupation. In that regard, I wish to inform the Council that President Abbas has officially conveyed to Switzerland, the depository, a request to convene the high contracting parties to consider measures to uphold their obligations, under common article 1 and article 146, on penal sanctions for grave breaches, and to enforce the Convention in occupied Palestine, including East Jerusalem.

The Palestinian people, whose resilience and steadfastness we honour and praise, look to the Security Council at this critical moment to uphold its resolutions and abiding principles first and foremost to save lives and to safeguard the prospects for a just and peaceful settlement of the conflict on the basis of the two-State solution and the pre-1967 borders, on which the international community is united but which has been so gravely undermined by Israel. A firm message must be sent by the Council to Israel to immediately cease its aggression against the Palestinian people and to abide by its obligations under international law. Moreover, it is high time that Israel, the occupying Power, be held accountable for its countless human rights violations and war crimes, including the killing of Palestinian civilians, the wanton destruction of Palestinian property and the malicious colonization of Palestinian land.

We call on the Security Council to act now to stop the bleeding in occupied Palestine, including the latest Israeli war on Gaza, and to revive our dying hope in the prospects for an end to the occupation and the tragic conflict, the achievement of peace and the realization of the aspirations of Palestinians for their freedom, rights and justice, which have too long been denied.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Israel.

Mr. Prosor (Israel): I would first like to thank the Secretary-General for his remarks. In the time that he spoke, another five rockets were fired from Gaza into southern Israel, one of which fell on a house. Before I begin my statement, I would like to thank Ambassador Gasana for presiding over this important meeting.

As I speak, there is a storm of rockets being fired by the Hamas terrorist organization in Gaza. Hamas is intentionally and indiscriminately threatening the lives of 3.5 million innocent men, women and children in Israel from the south to the north — from Beersheba to Tel Aviv and Haifa. In the past three days, 442 rockets have been fired into Israel. That is one every 10 minutes. Fifteen seconds is how much time one has to run for one's life. Imagine having only 15 seconds to find a bomb shelter. Now imagine doing that with small children, elderly parents or an ailing friend. A generation of Israeli children is growing up under the shadow of that threat. Such an abnormal way of life has become the norm for many Israelis. That is absolutely unacceptable. No nation, no people and no Government could tolerate it.

Hamas dragged us into this conflict. On the evening of 12 June, three Israeli teenagers — Eyal, Gilad and Naftali — were on their way home from school when they were kidnapped and murdered by Hamas terrorists. In the days that followed, Hamas began raining rockets indiscriminately on our homes and cities. While Israel showed restraint, Hamas responded with unrestrained aggression. There were more rockets and more terror attacks. Some people in this Chamber have criticized Israel for finally responding to those provocations. They have accused us of reacting disproportionately. Asking Israel to show restraint while our cities are under constant attack is like asking a fire brigade to battle an inferno with nothing more than buckets of water.

No country would accept the threats that Israel faces. We are determined to give Israelis the safety and security that they deserve. This week, Israel launched a self-defence operation, called Protective Edge, to counter the attacks, to defend our citizens and to

secure for them a life without a constant threat. The goal of our operation is to remove the threat posed by Hamas by dismantling its military infrastructure and to restore calm in Israel. We are not looking for a band-aid solution that will allow Hamas to rest and regroup. We are not going to give them so-called time out so that they can replenish their rocket supplies and hit us again in a few weeks.

Israel is taking great measures to avoid harming innocent civilians. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) warn the Palestinians in Gaza of imminent strikes. At the same time, Hamas instructs those civilians to stand on the roofs of those buildings and to act as human shields. Hamas exploits our concern for human life by hiding in Palestinian homes, schools and mosques and by using the basement of a hospital in Gaza as its headquarters. They are committing a double war crime, targeting Israeli civilians while hiding behind Palestinian civilians. Hamas is targeting the supply lines of its own people. It is firing rockets at an electrical plant in Ashkelon that is keeping the lights on for the citizens of Gaza. Earlier this week, Hamas blew up a tunnel near the Kerem Shalom crossing, and it has been firing rockets and missiles at this critical entry point. Let me be clear. Hamas is targeting the only crossing through which food, medicine and other essentials enter Gaza. That is how much it really cares about its own people. Despite the attacks, Israel is keeping the crossing open, and on Tuesday and Wednesday 242 truckloads of goods were delivered into the Gaza Strip.

Members of this body have repeatedly criticized Israel for restricting the entry of construction materials into Gaza. Let me explain what that cement and steel are being used for. They are certainly not being used to build schools, kindergartens or homes. They are being used to build rockets that Hamas shoots indiscriminately at Israeli schools, kindergartens and homes. They are being used to build terror tunnels that Hamas uses to kidnap Israelis.

Over the past few years, Hamas has built up a massive military machine with 10,000 rockets. Israel is now acting to dismantle that machine. Hamas is determined to escalate the situation with an arsenal it has acquired courtesy of one of the world's primary sponsors of terrorism, Iran. In March, Iran was caught red-handed trying to transfer long-range missiles into Gaza. Those missiles have a range of 160 kilometres and can hit Israel's largest population centres. Hamas must understand that it cannot target Israeli civilians. Just this morning, on one of our highways, the IDF stopped a car that was packed with explosives, en route to carrying out a suicide attack. Earlier this week, terrorists infiltrated Israel from the sea on a mission to attack a nearby kibbutz.

I would like to remind the Council that the terrorist group behind those attacks has a seat in the Palestinian unity Government. Hamas is recognized internationally as a terrorist organization by many countries, including members of the Security Council — the same Hamas that does not recognize Israel and promotes a genocidal agenda by seeking Israel's destruction. Its Charter states clearly that Israel exists and will continue to exist until Islam obliterates it. Hamas is practising what it preaches. It has sent suicide bombers into our shopping centres, buses and cafés. It has brainwashed an entire generation of Palestinian children and sent thousands of young people to terrorist training camps. Since 2013, it has attempted to kidnap 64 Israelis.

Members of the international community have embraced this Fatah-Hamas partnership, even though Hamas has not changed its tune or acted in concert with the Quartet principles. It has not recognized Israel, renounced violence or accepted previous agreements. Nonetheless, the international community has been willing to buy into this bad deal, and now Israeli citizens are paying the price. It is time for the international community to right this wrong and make it clear to Hamas that unity does not equal impunity.

Meanwhile, the Palestinian observer sits in this Chamber and has the audacity to shield Hamas even as that terror organization uses its own people as human shields. In his remarks, he did not mention a single one of the rockets fired into Israel — 442 rockets, and he does not say a word. His silence is as deafening as the rockets exploding in Israel right now. Through his choice of words, the Palestinian observer has become the mouthpiece of Hamas. Since when does a terror organization get a seat and a voice in the United Nations?

For years, we have called on the international community to condemn the rocket fire. We have been met with silence. For years, we spoke about the thousands of rockets that Hamas was smuggling into Gaza. Everyone thought we were exaggerating and said not a word. For years, we warned of the impending escalation and were ignored. Now that the rockets are landing in our backyard and the terrorists are on our doorstep, it is time for the international community to

finally recognize Hamas for what it really is — a terrorist organization that should be denounced, dismantled and delegitimized.

Unlike our enemies, Israel believes in the infinite value of human life. The Bible says, "I have set before you life and death.... therefore choose life." The Jewish people always choose life. Yet that is not what we see on the other side. In 2005, Israel evacuated from Gaza and in the process uprooted 12,000 Israelis from their homes. The Palestinians had the opportunity to build a prosperous and peaceful society. Instead of building the Palestinian people up, they have committed to tearing Israel down. Instead of choosing life, they celebrate death. In Gaza, there are public squares and hospitals named after terrorists. Visit a Gaza school and there are children dressed up as suicide bombers and chanting death threats to Israel. Visit the home of Abu Aysha's mother, and she will say how proud she is that her son was behind the kidnapping and murder of Eyal, Gilad and Naftali. A culture that celebrates martyrdom and murder is a culture that will always be at war with itself and with its neighbours.

Israel is at the forefront of the free world in fighting radical Islamic terrorism. The threat posed by terrorism is a global one — the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, Al-Qaida, Boko Haram, Hizbullah and Hamas. From Abuja to Fallujah, terrorists are attacking our schools and skyscrapers, our homes and hospitals, our malls and embassies. No nation is immune. If the international community wants the nations of the world to stand with it in the battle against terrorism tomorrow, it must stand with Israel today. The call from our capitals must be loud and clear — opposing terrorism in one place means opposing it in every place.

It is our cities, homes and families that are under fire right now. I ask each and every person in this Chamber what they would do if it was their family under attack. What would they expect their own Governments to do? There is only one responsible course of action for the Council — it is to condemn Hamas, condemn terrorism and condemn the rocket fire. It must call on President Abbas to dissolve the unity Government and support Israel's right to defend itself. That is the only way to achieve peace in our region.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.50 a.m.